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THE ELEMENTARY ENGLISH REVIEW

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PUPIL ACTIVITIES IN ELEMENTARY ENGLISH TEXTS

CLARA AXIE DYER

The University of Chicago

THE VARIOUS language activities which constitute a major part of the instructional material in middle and junior high grade English text-books fall into two classes which may be called the expression and the non-expression type. The former type teaches the technique of good usage through *expression activities* and the later type teaches language technique through *non-expression activities*.

The expression type emphasises the teaching of good oral and written language technique through its usage in actual expression activities. The following, taken from one of the text-book series used for this study, will exemplify the expression type of pupil activities:

"Writing a letter ordering a necessary article for the school club", "Writing articles for the school magazine", "Writing a note inviting some officer to address the assembly", "An oral report based upon information that has been collected concerning the organization of an English club", "Preparing oral and written compositions upon information obtained through a study of the occupations", and "Participation in a public debate". Such language activity stimulated by vital purpose, is performed in an actual expression

situation. Since usage in expression activity is the only reason for having a knowledge of correct technique and form, it is evident that the more closely the language text-books correlate the pupil activities with actual usage the more valuable is the instruction.

The non-expression type attempts to teach good language technique through activities that do not involve actual expression situations. They are largely of the abstract drill type. The following examples from book series B are typical:

"Choose the correct form of the italicized verbs in the following sentences", "Point out the compound subjects in the following sentences", "Are the following sentences right or wrong?", "Fill the blanks with the correct form of *come*". The nature of these activities is evident. This drill type of activity does not bear out the psychological principles involved in the learning process, such as vital motives and incentives, and content situations which are necessary to promote permanent learning. They disassociate the activity from vital performance and result, therefore, in mere "busy work", which is deadening.

The major weaknesses of the non-expres-

sion activities may be enumerated as follows:

They are abstract and are lacking in vital motives for using good form and technique; they are lacking in content situations necessary to permanent learning, and taking the activity out of its normal performance, they ignore the relation of knowledge to use.

The above criticism of the inadequacy of the non-expression activities, as a means for developing abilities to function in actual expression situations does not imply that knowledge is not the antecedent of the function, but it does indicate that "knowing and doing should develop together".

The purpose of this present investigation has been to determine to what extent English text-books make provision for pupil activities that do not separate knowledge of language technique. The aim has been (1) to discover the type of language activities that are contained in recent elementary and junior high English text books, (2) to discover the relative amount of time, in terms of pupil assignments or exercises, that the pupils are expected to spend on each of the types of activities, and to ascertain the relative amount of page space that each book devotes to each type of activity.

Methods of investigation:

Eight series of English text books published since 1920 were selected, four series for the intermediate grades and four for the junior high school grades. A general survey of these books was made to classify the types of pupil activities they contain. The results reveal that the activities fall into three groups: *expression* activities, *non-expression* activities, and *expression* activities *correlated with school work*. Each book was examined in detail to discover the number of pages and the number of assignments devoted to each activity. The complete list of the several activities

that constitute each of the three groups is given below:

- Improving language through expression activities—Usage—
- Written expression—short units, such as sentences,
- Written expression—long units, such as notes, letters, paragraphs, outlines, and stories,
- Oral expression—short units, such as sentences,
- Oral expression—long units, any forms beyond mere sentences.
- Improving language through non-expression activities—abstract drill—
- Filling out blanks with correct form—completion,
- Finding and naming things, classifying, changing, correcting, and analyzing, .
- Observing critically the oral expression of others,
- Revising and criticizing the pupil's own written work,
- Judging and criticizing the oral and written expression of others,
- Examining good and poor forms of expression,
- Copying from dictation,
- Learning definitions and correct form,
- Games,
- Articulation of words and oral reading from the printed page,
- Analysis of words for their meaning, pronunciation and spelling,
- Memorizing literary material,
- Silent reading of literature for appreciation.

The number of pages and of assignments for each of the above activities was tabulated by grade, for each series. One-fourth has been used as the unit for measuring the page space. The number of assignments and exercises was counted for each text.

Results:

Table I presents a summary of the per cent of total space and of the number of

assignments devoted to the three general types of pupil activities. Since it is believed that the number of assignments is a better measure of relative emphasis than page space, the data will be discussed largely in terms of pupil assignments. Although page space indicates emphasis it

1. The present English text books devote more time to assignments, and therefore more time to the non-expression than the expression activities, and very few assignments are correlated with school work or with activities in which the pupils have need for expressing themselves. For ex-

TABLE I

		Per cent of total page space and assignments for the pupil activities in the elementary grades.								Per cent of page space and assignments for pupil activities in the elementary grades						
		GRADES								GRADES						
Activities		Books	4		5		6		Books		7		8		9	
Expression activities	A	39	34	30	43	33	40		E	21	24	12	23	28	32	
	B	44	42	42	46	41	49		F	25	25	17	15	22	21	
	C	37	32	42	39	21	26		G	18	46	32	66	21	51	
	D	42	33	30	37	35	34		H	33	47	41	34	48	45	
Non-expression activities	A	60	66	70	57	67	59		E	79	76	88	77	72	68	
	B	55	58	58	54	59	50		F	75	74	75	77	76	76	
	C	63	68	57	61	79	73		G	61	43	76	33	72	44	
	D	58	66	69	62	75	66		H	66	53	59	66	51	55	
Expression act. cor. with school work	A								E							
	B								F	.09	.89	7.8	8.4	2.1	2.1	
	C								G	21	11	.25	.86	6	.045	
	D	.48	.32	.1	.12											

Table I shows the per cent of the total pages and the per cent of the total assignments for each of the three types of pupil activities for grades four, five, six, seven, eight, and nine in the eight series of the teaching of English textbooks.

does not indicate relative emphasis of the several activities, because some types of activities, requiring more explanation than others, occupy more page space. However, page space will indicate the relative emphasis that the different texts give to the same type of activity.

The results of the investigation as summarized in Table I reveal the following general tendencies:

ample, book series D, on the elementary level devotes nearly twice as many assignments to the non-expression than to the expression activities; less than one per cent of all its assignments are correlated with school work. In series F, on the junior high level, nearly three times as many assignments are devoted to the non-expression as to the expression type; a very few to correlating them with the curricular ac-

p*—Per cent of page space.

a†—Per cent of assignments.

tivities. With the exception of book series D, F, and G, no assignments whatever are made in correlating training in English expression in situations where it is actually used.

2. The junior high text books, even more than the elementary text books, devote a larger per cent of their assignments to non-expression activities. For example, the per cent of non-expression assignments for junior high book series G and H are in each grade nearly double those for the expression type, and for series E and F the assignments for the non-expression are with the exception of the ninth grade about three times the number of the expression type. Each book series on the elementary level devotes less than twice as many assignments to the non-expression activities as to the expression.

3. There is a tendency for the text books to decrease the number of non-expression assignments and to increase the number of expression in the successive grades. Each book series on the elementary level with the exception of C devotes more expression assignments to the sixth grade than to the fourth and fifth. On the junior high level each series with the exception of F devotes more non-expression assignments to the ninth grade than to the seventh and eighth.

4. The texts vary somewhat in the relative amount of page space devoted to the three types of activities. For example, book series A devotes, relatively, more assignments to the non-expression type of activities than B; series E, relatively, more to the non-expression activities than H.

5. The per cent of page space for the expression activities in the elementary grades is greater for each series in the fourth and fifth grades than it is for the sixth. This tendency does not appear to be outstanding in the junior high series.

Conclusions:

1. The major portion of the child's time is spent in attempting to master usage of

good language technique through non-expression activities. The data has revealed that the pupil is spending more than half of his time in activities not directly related to usage through actual expression. Since we use language technique in either written or oral expression, we should expect English text books to outline functional activities involving usage of language in normal living situations. For this reason we question the value of text books that fill their pages with activities of the non-expression type. This is no doubt an easy method of filling its pages, but it is not a fruitful one for forming the functional language habits. Consider the per cent of time a fourth grade child spends in the assignments of the two general types of activities in book series A, which provides 34 per cent of expression and 66 per cent of non-expression assignments. It is evident that he is spending two-thirds of his time in activities that are not in actual expression situations. The ability of the fourth-grade child to make concrete generalizations from abstract situations, such as these non-expression activities involve, is to be questioned. Some of the non-expression activities are highly commendable. For examples, "Revising his own work," "Judging and criticizing oral and written expression of others," are good activities for improving oral and written expression of others; but very few assignments appear in this category. The wide silent reading activities which are outlined in book series H are also a good means for improving language vocabulary but for an English text book to attempt to include sufficient silent reading material within its pages is absurd. It would be much better to outline suggestions for types of reading. The writer does not mean to imply that the non-expression activities have no value but simply that training in language technique should be in situations where it functions normally.

2. The number of expression assignments increase as the grades advance. This apparent increase of expression activities through the elementary and junior high grades indicates that the text books construct the content of their texts on the principle that good technique of expression is learned in abstract form prior to its application to situations involving its use. This principle is analogous to that of the A B C and the phonetic methods of learning to read. These methods used originated in the belief that the child must first learn the elements that compose the words before he can be expected to recognize a word. In order to read a story he must have training in reading a phrase, then sentences, then paragraphs, then stories. This method of learning to read was a long abstract step by step process. Recent methods teach necessary details not in abstract unrelated form, but in the sentence and the story. If this is true of reading it is reasonable to expect that it would be true of teaching the necessary fundamentals in technique that are needed in the activities of written and oral expression. The necessary training and drill should be given in actual expression situations. For example, the child may learn with the proper supervision, the correct form of *come* through its use in his own written expression. This is the only reason he will have for knowing its form.

3. The relation of expression activities to school work is almost completely ignored. In as much as the pupil uses English in the curricular activities, one expects to find some application to these activities. If we are effectively to improve the child's abil-

ity to use his mother tongue, the training activities will need to be applied to the kind of situations in which language functions. This is the psychological principle that underlies all learning. Using the words of Dr. J. F. Bobbitt, "We should train for an activity when there is a need for it, in ways in which the activity functions normally". The text book maker needs to apply this psychological law of the exercise of function to the content of his text book.

The above conclusions, revealing the outstanding weaknesses of English text in the light of pupil activities, involve the following suggestions to the makers of English texts:

- (1). That they minimize the amount of page space and the number of assignments devoted to non-expression activities.
- (2). That they discontinue presenting a hodge podge of the entire field of English within the few pages that compose a single text.
- (3). That they correlate the expression activities in so far as is possible with the regular school work, with situations that demand a real need for good form and usage of language technique.
- (4). That the general nature of the content be in large measure an outline of the fundamentals of standard usage for the grade levels accompanied by suggestive activities that center the attention of the pupil on good usage in actual expression situations.
- (5). That the fundamental standards of usage be formulated on the basis of the needs which have been discovered through investigations.

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THE DEW-LIGHT

THE DEW-MAN comes over the mountains wide,
Over the deserts of sand,
With his bag of clear drops
And his brush of feathers."

From *Silverhorn*—Hilda Conkling.
See page 13.

FROM THE POETS TO THE CHILDREN

THREE BOOKS IN REVIEW

JOAN MARCIER

IN THE name of children's literature, much has been written about children, a great deal for them, and a very little by boys and girls themselves. During the past few months, Hilda Conkling has added another volume to the slender store of literature by children, and poetry for children has been enriched by two contributions: *Porridge Poetry*, by Hugh Lofting, and *Sing Song*, an edition of the poems of Christina Rosetti.

PORRIDGE POETRY—Frederick Stokes—is as merry and rollicking as Hugh Lofting can make it, with unforget-



Clippety Clop

table verses and incomparable pictures. The "Lollipopinjay" dances on the jacket, and within, "Lulu Gubrious," "The Toffee Analyst"—who is "so learned and sophisticky," "Vera Virginia," and the chimpanzee barbers, are creatures who inhabit the country of Wee Willie Winkie and the Cow That Jumped Over the Moon. Where, aside from Mother Goose herself, will one find more gleeful nonsense than Petroleum and Turpentine?

"Oh won't you be my Valentine
"This wintertime, sweet Turpen-
tine?"
"How can I be, Petroleum?
"I'm promised to Linoleum."

The notable company of nursery seamen, which includes the Owl and the Pussycat, the Three Men In a Tub, Winken, Blinken and Nod, must make room for four more: the two mariners, who, in talking "sailor-like chit-chatitudes" forgot to take their longitude, and Scallywag and Gollywog.

Hugh Lofting has happily written of experiences familiar to children. The kitchen sink, wherein cruises a terrifying pirate in a coffee-pot, linoleum, fudge, saxaphone players, barber-shops, all figure in these verses. He plays with words in a way that will assuredly delight young readers. The teacher of the Vegetable School, for example, strives to

Have the parsnips parse correctly.
Let us, Lettuce, start at eight.

and the brothers Up Wright and Down Wright and Betwixt and Between at last declare their identity.

One thing only, puzzles us. Mr. Lofting has left Thursday out of his Kitchen Kalendar. What will be eat on Thursday, Mr. Lofting? Must we fast, because nothing



The Fledgling and the Bug

will rhyme? Couldn't we have a Welsh Rabbit and say nothing about it? Or perhaps that's the day to go to Wei Hai Wo's for a Chow Mein.

A reviewer need not turn prophet to state that children will love Porridge Poetry. They will spell it out, chant it, carry it to bed with them, read it to tatters. Hugh Lofting has written exactly the kind of poetry one wished he would write. Porridge Poetry is a new nursery classic.

AN OLD Classic, recently edited and given to the children in a most attractive form, is Sing Song, by Christina Rossetti—Maemillan. This poet has long been neglected by child readers. Yet she has the rare qualities of a children's poet, shared by so very few—Barrie, Stevenson, Eugene Field. In these verses is found simplicity, wonder, and an eager savoring of everyday experiences.

This edition should help bring Christina Rossetti into her rightful place in children's literature, for it is a splendid selection. The editors have removed almost all traces of the nineteenth-century sentimentalism leaving unmarred the charm of Christina Rossetti's happier verses, which touch common objects with delight and wonder.

O sailor, come ashore,
What have you brought for me?
Red coral, white coral,
Coral from the sea.

Sing Song brings children gentle poetry, with delicate humor and a feeling of tenderness for all things.

Hopping frog, hop here and be seen,
I'll not pelt you with stick or stone.
or

Hurt no living thing:
Ladybird, nor butterfly,
Nor moth with dusty wing,
Nor cricket chirping cheerily,
Nor grasshopper so light of leap,
Nor dancing gnat, nor beetle fat,
Nor harmless worms that creep.

It should be said that the editors have not admitted any of the verses wherein the pitying emotions run riot.

The concern for beasts and birds which does occur in the book expresses only a child's natural interest in robins, caterpillars, cows and mice. Exaggerated feeling has been deleted.

The section entitled Lesson Time contains rhymes which, in a simpler day, before children learned geography from a sand-table and

took an active interest in their own I. Q.'s, may have helped little Englishmen to learn the multiplication tables, the colors, and the number of months in the year. Some of the most winsome slumber songs in English are under the general title Lullaby, Baby! while in Just for Fun is to be found such gentle nonsense as:

The peacock has a score of eyes,
With which he cannot see;
The codfish has a silent sound,
However that may be;
No dandelions tell the time,
Although they turn to clocks;
Cat's-eradle does not hold the cat,
Nor foxglove fit the fox.



If a mouse could fly

—From Sing Song

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SILVERHORN, by Hilda Conkling—Frederick Stokes—does not contain new material, but is a selection of verses from *Shoes of the Wind* and *Poems By a Little Girl*, chosen by reason of their being favorites with child-readers, by a number of children's librarians.

Inevitably, the reviewer of Hilda Conkling's work characterizes it as delicate, spontaneous, fresh, fanciful. Her verses are all of these. Her clear-eyed perception, graceful imagination, and naivete are reminiscent of Emily Dickinson.

O little soldier with the golden helmet,
What are you guarding on my lawn?

asks Hilda of a dandelion, as the New England poetess might have asked sixty years ago. Or again

This pansy has a thinking face
Like the yellow moon

. . .
But there on the other side,
These that wear purple and blue,
They are the Velvets,
The king with his cloak,
The queen with her gown,
The prince with his feather.

Whereas Emily Dickinson committed previous poetic sins in attempting to write rhymed verses, Hilda Conkling's even more complete spontaneity precludes the disciplined march of rhyme and rhythm, and offers, in its place, rhythm of thought. Her poems skip along, as she herself must, with little running side-excursions toward objects which interest her. In Geography, which seems, in a measure, to epitomize her verse, she darts from the "grayish bluish silverish" balsam trees, to the chickens in the yard, and back again to the trees, thence to Fairyland.

Reviewers have sometimes called attention to what seems an occasional self-con-

sciousness—a deliberate naivete, manifested, for example, in Poems:

I know how poems come;
They have wings.
When you are not thinking of it
I suddenly say
"Mother, a poem!"

These verses occasionally have a note of mature wistfulness. Jeanne D'Arc is an example:

If I were Jeanne D'Arc
It would be hard remembering the
apple-orchard in bloom,
With nothing about me but noise
and armies,
All men, all women, unhappy,
No time for children (Let them be
quiet!).
No time for anybody
But kings . . .
And the appletrees all the time
wondering . . .

Such poetry as this is outside the realm of children's literature.

Hilda Conkling's work at its delightful best, is the product of an eager, sensitive mind, stimulated by delicate and beautiful sensations. The color of pansies, the lights on mountains, the coolness of dew, and the scent of flowers, have sung themselves into verses that should be profoundly appealing to children.

And yet Silverhorn, although a child's book, has perhaps an even greater appeal to grown-ups. It is not a children's book in the sense that *Sing Song* or *Porridge Poetry* are for children.

Each of these books is illustrated with a fortunate feeling for subject matter and tone. Marguerite Davis' drawings have done much to make *Sing Song* desirable, for she has admirably caught the spirit of the verses. The illustrations for Silverhorn, by Dorothy P. Lathrop, are an added charm to the book, for they are highly decorative in themselves, and intensify the

elfishness of the poetry. Hugh Lofting himself made the pictures for Porridge Poetry, and comment is superfluous.

It is arbitrary and profitless to set age-limits upon poetry. Porridge Poetry is perhaps intended for the first four grades, yet children will read it, as they do Mother Goose, long after they are supposed to have graduated to The Village Blacksmith and Robert of Lincoln: Silverhorn will find

readers in every grade: Sing Song was written for little children.

From these three books, a child may gain a variety of literary experience. The pictures and jingles of Porridge Poetry are captivating; the winsomeness and grace of a different age and country are offered in Sing Song; and Silverhorn is a light-hearted stimulus to young imaginings, and a record of happy sensations.



*"Who has seen the wind?"
Sing-Song—Christina Rossetti*

THE GENERAL'S BIRTHDAY PRESENT

LOUISE FRANKLIN BACHE

SCENE I

(Two girls in Revolutionary costumes, both knitting socks. They are sitting very precisely in straight backed chairs.)

PRUDENCE (in monotone): Under, over! Under, over! Under, over!

DEBORAH: I ask you to count to yourself, Prue, your voice distracts me. Between the beating of my heart and the sound of your words, I know not where I am.

PRUDENCE: Your pardon, dear Deb; when my thoughts are busy, I seem forced to work my tongue. 'Tis the nineteenth of February, you know. Three more days and 'twill be General Washington's birthday. What a sorrowful time it must be for him! What an unhappy year it has been for everyone! Grandmama says she never knew such a cold, obstinate winter. 'Tis said the British can trace our poor soldiers on the snow by blood prints.

DEBORAH: Talk not of it, Prue dear. I cannot bear to hear such stories.

PRUDENCE: But someone must talk of it. Something must be done. Our good neighbor, Robert Morris, has just given the General money to clothe and feed his men. But it takes much to purchase even the necessities these days.

DEBORAH: I wish there was some way we could get a birthday present through to the General—a present that would be a *present*. What think you, Prue, he would like better than aught else?

PRUDENCE (gravely): 'Tis money all men need these days, even our great Washington.

DEBORAH: But how can we get money through the lines? The British sleep with one eye open at night, so careful are they that neither food nor help comes to the Colonists.

(A boy bursts into the room. It is the girls' brother, Richard.)

RICHARD: Search your wits, girls, and tell me who is without.

PRUDENCE: Has a messenger come through from the General? What is happening at Valley Forge?

RICHARD (laughing): The General! Valley Forge! Can you think of aught else? It is old Dame Mary, the herb woman, of whom I speak.

BOTH GIRLS (in disappointed tones): Dame Mary!

RICHARD: Why so disappointed? If there is news about the General, Dame Mary can tell you. She has a son in the British army and a son with our troops. Somehow she has a trick of getting through all lines. She is as loyal to Washington, however, as we are ourselves.

BOTH GIRLS (seizing Richard by the arm. Together): Do you think so?

RICHARD: I am sure of it.

PRUDENCE: Then I have an idea. Let's take a pair of woolen socks and fill them with all the money we can scrape together and all the money our neighbors can let us have and send them by Dame Mary to the General with our loyal birthday greetings.

RICHARD (slowly): 'Tis a pretty fair idea, even if it did come out of a girl's head. Let's at it this minute.

(Children take hold of hands and race gleefully off stage.)

SCENE II

(Deborah and Prudence knitting, same as Scene I)

PRUDENCE (gets up, throws knitting down impatiently): I can't stand it another minute. (Clasping hands anxiously; goes towards Deborah.) Oh, Deb, suppose Dame Mary gave the socks to our

enemy. Or suppose she wasn't really honest and kept them herself. Or suppose something happened to her and she never got to Washington.

DEBORAH (slowly and calmly without looking up from her work): 'Tis just as easy to suppose something nice, my dear Prue, as to suppose something bad. Why do you pull such a wry face? It would help your country more if you went on with your knitting.

PRUDENCE (goes to one side of the stage. Stands looking out of window. In great excitement): Can I believe my eyes? Dame Mary and Richard are coming up the walk. I'm all ears for the news!

(Dame Mary and Richard enter stage. Both girls cluster eagerly about them. Dame Mary quite out of breath, leans heavily on Richard.)

RICHARD (very gallantly): Get the good Dame a chair, you scatterbrains. Why stand you gaping? (Both girls rush for a chair. Each brings her own chair to Dame Mary.) One chair is enough, e'en Dame Mary could wish no more. Still perhaps you meant the other for me. If so, accept my thanks.

(Richard and Dame Mary sit down. Mary's attitude shows her weariness. Richard assumes an air of exaggerated importance.)

DEBORAH (all impatience): Oh, Dame Mary, I know you are overly tired, but have not you voice enough to tell us if the General received his birthday present?

DAME MARY: Aye, little lady, that he did! And old eyes have never seen a sad-

der nor a happier picture. First the gentleman laughed, and then he cried. 'Twas the only birthday present, he said, that got through the British lines. He wrote you a note with his best quill pen which I have fetched to you over many a cold mile. (Hunts in pocket of skirt and fishes up letter which she hands Deborah.)

(Prudence and Richard lean over Deborah's shoulder while she breaks seal and reads.)

DEBORAH (reads): *To the Misses Deborah and Prudence Alden: I pray you accept my thanks for the socks. A more generous pair I have never seen. They have brought happiness to many at Valley Forge. Tell you the good neighbors who helped in the gift that socks have helped to save a country. Ever gratefully and obediently yours, George Washington.* (Clasping letter to her heart.) A letter from the great General himself! 'Tis a reward true patriots will always cherish. (Impulsively rushing to Dame Mary.) Oh, good Dame Mary, to think I doubted you. I will not soon forgive myself for that.

RICHARD: As long as everyone is happy, let us make merry in honor of the birthday of our great general, George Washington. (Girls and Dame Mary join in shouts of Hurrah! Richard seizes hold of Dame Mary's hand. Prudence and Deborah join them. The four form a circle and sing gaily Yankee Doodle as they dance about with exaggerated steps and gestures. At last verse all march off stage in a straight line still singing.)

PUBLIC LIBRARY
FOR THE CHILDREN
DETROIT MICH.
A Letter by George Washington

Hand & rear Anchored
New bridge Sep³⁰ 1863

Sr.

In the letter which I did
my self the honor of writing to
you yesterday respecting the
cloth taken in the Quebec Fleet
I forgot to mention, that it was
fully my intention to have done
it, but the cargo of those ves-
sels consisted in part of salted
beef & Pork, the securing of
which (if good) would be of ex-
treme advantage to the Army
in any operations - or for the
Garrison at West Point where
can be undertaken -

The propriety & practic-
ability of such a purchase is now
submitted to the consideration
of Congress - and I have the ho-
nor to be with the greatest
respect - Sir

G. Washington
Adj't Genl

His Excellency
The Presid^t of Congress G. Washington

The above, with accompanying illustrations, photographed by L. C. Handy from originals in The Library of Congress.

YANKEE CLUB
MOUNT VERNON
FOR THE CHILDREN
On Washington's Birthday



THE MOTHER OF WASHINGTON
From an old engraving in The Library of Congress

It was his home that Washington loved the most.
In his diary, April 16, 1789, he wrote:

"About ten o'clock I bade adieu to Mount Vernon,
to private life, and to domestic felicity; and, with a
mind oppressed with more anxious and painful sensa-
tions than I have words to express, set out for New
York with the best disposition to render service to my
country in obedience to its call."

FOR THE CHILDREN
A Page from the Gettysburg Address
Autographed by Abraham Lincoln

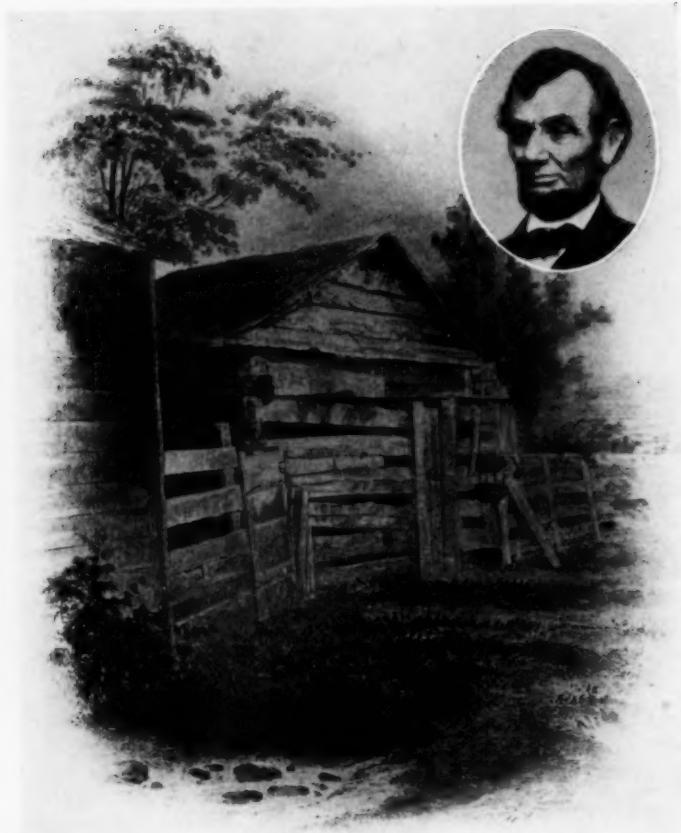
Four score and seven years ago our fathers
brought forth, upon this continent, a new nation, con-
ceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition
that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, test-
ing whether that nation, or any nation, so conceived,
and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met
here on a great battle-field of that war. ^{have} ~~have~~
~~come~~ to dedicate a portion of it as the final rest-
ing place ^{for} of those who here gave their lives that
that nation might live. It is altogether fitting
and proper that we should do this.

But in a larger sense we can not dedicate—
we can not consecrate—we can not hallow this
ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled
gave ^{their} lives, have consecrated it far above our power
to add or detract. The world will little note,
nor long remember, what we say here; but
we can never forget what they did here. It is
for us, the living, ^{Abraham Lincoln} to be dedicated
how to ^{work} to the unfinished work
which they have,
thus far, so nobly carried on. It is rather

FOR THE CHILDREN

On Lincoln's Birthday



ABRAHAM LINCOLN was born in this log cabin on
a farm at Hodgenville, Kentucky, February 12,
1809. This little hut was his home for seven years.

THE RETARDED CHILD AND HIS COMPOSITION WORK

MRS. CHARLOTTE VILLARD
Gunnison, Utah

THE CHILD to whom composition is just one thing more "to take the joy out of life" makes his regular appearance each September. Who knows? Perhaps he comes to put the teacher on her mettle. The question is not so much "Can I bring him up to standard" as "How can I motivate his work so that progress this year shall carry him to a more intelligent mastery of English".

In all English teaching one cannot stress too much the value of intelligent testing carried on consistently that the teacher and pupils may know the way they are going. Early in the year, say within the first two weeks, a test for diagnostic purposes in composition should be given and carefully interpreted that from it the teacher may gather data to direct her general teaching.

This test should be in free composition and the teacher should give clear directions and reasonable time for writing a story of the child's own experience; each pupil writes his name, age, and the date of the test upon the paper.

These papers are carefully scored for quality according to the Hillegas or some other standard scale and records compiled. Errors of spelling and punctuation should be listed and writing noted. Mistakes which are common to many papers should receive group attention; individual difficulties should be treated separately. Now is the time and this is the test to make the pupil conscious of his needs and to inspire ambition to overcome his particular difficulties.

In the case of the retarded pupil this test, checking and follow up, is twice important and requires skill on the part of the teacher that the child may be made

fully aware of his particular stumbling-blocks. He should see his work as compared with the average of the class and in a quiet way be shown how he rates compared with, perhaps a particular friend, or his own social group. This calls for great care that a motive be given for making improvement rather than discouraging criticism which would make him self-conscious and give him an "I can't do it anyway" idea.

Very likely we shall find our backward pupil poor in writing, deficient in spelling, and lacking in sentence conception. Obviously to try to check on all these at once would be disastrous. What shall be done? Shall we shift the responsibility and let him drift or take him as he is and teach him what he needs to know? Inasmuch as oral language precedes written, I should give him individual attention, leading him to talk freely of some experience of real interest to him; let him read a story in which clear cut sentences are prominent, then have him retell the story. Having enjoyed these talks several times, the pupil's greater ease of oral expression suggests that an attempt be made in written reproduction. Let him read his story to see if it talks to him; if not how can he better it? Repeat the above procedure; criticize together, remembering that our aim is "to tell the story in good sentences". This done we may learn to organize our stories into larger units in point of time order, and importance so developing a paragraph sense. A rough outline will help but only to get our story going smoothly. Try, criticize, try again, improve; constructive criticism will stir his awakening understanding and bring him greater ease in writing.

For teaching good form, correct spelling and proper punctuation, tests like the practice tests used in the adjustment school at Los Angeles would be very valuable. These tests are arranged in a series of increasing difficulty covering all important types of composition work to be used according to the pupil's own capacity for progress and mastery. Each step is in four parts: (1) a correct form to study and copy (imitation); (2) a unit of work to arrange in form like first exercise (rebuilding); (3) a unit of work incomplete (controlled construction); (4) direction

for work (free construction).. Other drills and helps will suggest themselves by the daily classroom progress.

It is important to keep the pupil in the social group where he belongs that he may learn to function in the give and take of his class or group activities. Taking this retarded pupil where we found him, by definite instruction building up his ability to overcome difficulties one at a time and showing him the actual improvement in his own work, we have helped him to help himself. This after all is the real job of the real teacher.

AT THE INAUGURATION OF WASHINGTON

New York City, April 30, 1789

Eliza Morton Quincy

Privately Printed Memoir

I WAS on the roof of the first house in Broad Street, which belonged to Captain Prince, the father of one of my schoolmates, and so near Washington that I could almost hear him speak. The windows and roofs of the houses were crowded, and in the streets the throng was so dense that it seemed as if one might literally walk on the heads of the people. The balcony of the hall was in full view of this assembled multitude. In the centre of it was placed a table, with a rich covering of red velvet; and upon this a crimson-velvet cushion, on which lay a large and elegant Bible. This was all the paraphernalia for this august scene. All eyes were fixed upon the balcony, where, at the appointed hour, Washington entered, accompanied by the chancellor of the State of New York, by John Adams, Vice-President; Governor Clinton, and many other distinguished men. By the great body of the people he had probably never been seen except as a military hero. The first in war was now to be the first in peace. His entrance upon the balcony announced by universal shouts of joy and welcome. He was dressed in a suit of black velvet, and his appearance was most dignified and solemn. Advancing to the front of the balcony, he laid his hand on his heart and bowed several times, and then retreated to an armchair near the table. The populace appeared to understand that the scene had overcome him, and were at once hushed into profound silence.

AN EXPERIMENT IN COMPOSITION

ALICE KETCHAM

A. L. Holmes School, Detroit

I HAVE long felt that there must be some way of interesting the child in good English without continually reminding him that as he writes his choicest thoughts upon paper he must not forget to put in capitals, periods, question marks and commas. In many cases the child knows that the good thought goes "glimmering" while he vainly tries to decide whether "a sentence ends here," or "should this word begin with a capital letter," or "must this pause be shown by a comma or a period."

The problem became so interesting to me that I decided to study it experimentally. In beginning the experiment, I divided my group into three classes on the basis of a test in mechanics. With this test I also gave a composition test and a general intelligence test, but the mechanics test seemed to be the most logical one upon which to make the division. The purpose of this selection was to secure a more equal division of the abilities of the class.

I mapped out my procedure thus:

I. Aim:

To find out when the consciousness of the mechanics of writing ceases and real appreciation begins.

II. To find out which method brings the above desired result:

a. To teach mechanics as a thing apart—then appreciation.

b. Or to drill upon mechanics and leave appreciation to come naturally.

c. Or to teach appreciation through a project which naturally brings in the mechanics.

Class (a) was a 6A class; class (b) was a 6B class; class (c) was a 6A class. Class (c) is the one which I shall speak of more

fully as the other two classes come under the head of "the ordinary, everyday teaching process."

The project chosen for this experiment was the publishing of a newspaper. The class accepted the idea enthusiastically, and we at once proceeded to discussion of the "ways and means." Of course the editing side had to be stressed. This meant giving everybody a definite "job" on that paper. After much discussion we decided on this staff:

Manager
Editor-in-Chief
Assistant Editors—
School News
Sport
Joke
Court News
General News
Story
Library
Cartoonist
Advertising Manager

This list was put upon the board and left. Why? Because no one was ready to take such a "big job" before learning to be a reporter. He must learn from the bottom up. We did this by reporting orally and then writing upon all kinds of school activities, newspaper articles, stories—real and imaginary—book reports, and last but not least, good jokes—real ones which concerned the pupils themselves or were heard about some one else in school. As a child showed improvement in this work I rated him. Then came the day when certain ones assumed the duties of *editors* of departments. To keep everyone in personal touch with the paper, each

editor chose reporters to help him. These reporters while assisting in one department could nevertheless write for another department. In this way each one felt an interest in the success of the paper which made him attempt to write. He began to notice mistakes in his own work, because it was going to appear in print for others to see and criticize.

Right here my *class (a)* which I had not intended to allow to come in contact with the newspaper, made such strenuous objections at being left out that we had to take them in. We did this by telling them that when their work was of a sufficiently good standard to be judged by me, they

could have it put in the newspaper. Of course, as this class was working especially upon mechanics of writing, nothing less than "perfect" work would be accepted.

The first copy of the newspaper is ready for the press. It is very crude and in some cases the wording of the articles is almost poor, but—it is, in the best sense, their own work. When the second edition of the paper is ready, we shall compare it with the first in regard to *quality first* and *then mechanics*. This can not but help to develop in the children an appreciation for good work in every respect. The first step toward solving the problem will then have been taken.

GETTYSBURG ADDRESS

Abraham Lincoln

(Delivered November 19, 1863, at the dedication of the
Gettysburg National Cemetery)

FOURSCORE and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation—or any nation so conceived and so dedicated—can long endure.

We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We are met to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting place of those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here; but it can never forget what they did here.

It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here, to the unfinished work that they have thus far so nobly carried on. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us; that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they here gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation shall, under God, have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

TEACHING ORAL COMPOSITION IN THE PRIMARY GRADES

A SERIES OF PAPERS BY CLASSROOM TEACHERS
in
The Carter School, Chicago, Illinois

Editor's Note:

The papers in this series were prepared by teachers in the Carter School, Chicago, Illinois, after a plan was agreed upon in conference with the principal. Teachers of elementary school English will find the papers suggestive and stimulating. The editor desires to interest other school groups to report upon classroom teaching planned in conference in this manner. Groups of teachers desiring to do so, might use as a basis of their plans, the following articles:

Composition and the Composition Class. By Elvira D. Cabell. The Elementary English Review, May, 1924. Pages 97-100.

Classroom Work in Constructive Criticism of Oral and Written Composition. By Frances Jenkins. The Elementary English Review, April, 1924. Pages 57-60.

The Correlation of Language and Social

Sciences in the Intermediate Grades. By Mabel Snedaker. The Elementary English Review, April and May, 1924. Pages 50-53 and 92-95.

Home-Made Composition Scales. By G. M. Wilson. The Elementary English Review, September, 1924. Pages 165-170.

The schemes worked out in the Carter School will prove helpful to other groups undertaking to work in this way. In this number of The Review, A Lesson Procedure in Oral Composition for Primary Grades; The Plan, by Abby E. Lane, and a lesson conducted in Grade 2A are published. Other papers to be published in the series are:

Oral Composition—Grade 4B. By Charlotte Scott.

Oral Composition—Grade 4B. By Elsie R. Larson.

LESSON PROCEDURE IN ORAL COMPOSITION FOR SECOND AND THIRD GRADES

*Abby E. Lane
Principal, Carter School, Chicago*

- I. These suggestions are for the teacher's guidance in her own preparation.
 - A. The teacher's aim in all grades is to help pupils to talk in an interesting manner about what interests them.
 - B. The results may seem trivial to an adult but they are not to the children.
 - C. Pupils must not talk aimlessly.
 - D. Gradually they must gain skill in the use of language and in knowledge of correct usage.
 - E. Children have plenty to talk about.
 - 1. The teacher's business is to make them conscious of this.
 - 2. The teacher must help them to express themselves.
- F. The teacher must not expect too much.
 - 1. Set up a few simple standards.
 - 2. Concentrate on attaining them.
- G. All normal children should be able to give simple talks before the end of the second year in school.
- H. Errors in English made during class discussions are to be corrected by the teacher if not noted by the children.
 - 1. Do not try to correct all mistakes each day.
 - 2. Concentrate on a few until they are fairly well mastered.

II. The first step in the recitation is class preparation.

A. The teacher must motivate the work by making the children conscious of a purpose in talking.

1. This may be done by giving a simple model of what the teacher considers a good talk.

2. It may be done by bringing in some point of interest related to the experience of the children.

B. The teacher must recognize the danger of imitation.

1. The method of stimulating interest should not lead to pure imitation.

2. It should on the contrary, encourage individuality.

III. The next step is choosing a subject.

A. Free choice on the part of the children is desirable.

B. Several topics from which to make a choice encourage individuality.

C. The talks should be limited to three or four sentences.

1. It helps the timid child to gain confidence.

2. It controls the rambling talkative child.

3. It makes it possible to secure good sentence sequence.

D. The subjects must be limited to such as can be successfully treated in a few sentences.

IV. The next step is planning the story.

A. Sentence sequence, talking to the subject, is to be insisted upon from the first.

B. After the children have had a lit-

tle experience, the following should be emphasized:

1. Begin with an interesting sentence; one that interests the audience from the first.

2. Make the closing sentence a good ending to your story.

V. The next step is telling the story.

A. Remember you are talking to an audience.

B. Take a good position.

C. Speak distinctly.

D. Have a pleasing voice.

E. Interest your classmates.

F. It is a good plan to pause at the end of each sentence.

1. This trains in sentence recognition.

2. It helps in written work.

VI. The next step is judging the story.

A. Free expression on the part of the children is to be encouraged.

B. Commend the good before you call attention to errors.

C. Set up the following standards for the guidance of the children :

1. Could you hear him ?

2. Was his position good ?

3. Did he stick to his subject ?

4. Was his talk interesting ?

5. Did he have a good beginning sentence ?

6. Was his closing sentence a good one ?

7. Did you notice any mistakes in English ?

D. In class discussions, require complete sentences except when they would be unnatural in good conversation.

(Continued on next page)

ORAL COMPOSITION
GRADE 2A

*May H. Kinsey
Carter School, Chicago*

TEACHER: This is a good time for the little people who have something to say to us. A great many of you like to talk about things that happen at home. Some of you run errands and some help in other ways. You have things you wish for and once in a while you are disappointed in your wish. We like to hear just how you feel about these things. I'm going to tell you a story that I heard a little girl tell, and you'll understand when you hear it, why I liked it. She was telling about a trip she made downtown with her father. She said:

"My father took me to the Automat for lunch. He bought me a glass of milk and a sandwich. I reached to the center of the table and spilled my glass of milk over a man's hat. I don't think my father will take me out to lunch again."

I can just imagine how the little girl felt. That is why I liked it. She put her own feelings into it. That's the kind of story I like to hear you tell.

You may be thinking about your story. While you're thinking, what are you going to keep in mind?

PUPIL: We must talk about just one thing.

TEACHER: Yes. When you choose something to talk about stick to that one thing. As you go along with your story, what are you going to keep in mind?

PUPIL: We must leave out all of the unnecessary words.

TEACHER: What are some of them?

PUPIL: But, and, then, well, my mother she, my brother he, so, long time ago, once upon a time, why.

TEACHER: You have still one important thing to remember. It will help keep your story short.

PUPIL: We must stop when we are through telling the thing we started to say.

TEACHER: When you come up in front to talk you must think of two or three things. What will you think of first?

PUPIL: How to stand. We mustn't put our hands in our pockets.

TEACHER: What do we call that?

PUPIL: Good position.

TEACHER: What's the next thing a good speaker does?

PUPIL: He talks plain and loud enough to be heard by the children in the back seats.

TEACHER: I think we are ready. Irving volunteers.

IRVING: Sunday was my brother's birthday. My sister made a birthday cake. She put it on the dining room table. Every time I passed through the dining room, I got hungry. I hope I have a birthday cake when I get old.

TEACHER: Did you like Irving's story? Why?

PUPIL: Yes, he told a story that was his own.

TEACHER: That was a very good talk. Arthur, let us hear yours.

ARTHUR: I saw a collision between a Willys Knight and an electric. The Willys Knight was smashed up. I was glad because it was going so fast. I knew the driver was to blame. An electric can't go very fast.

TEACHER: I would have left out one sentence.

PUPIL: He could have stopped where he told about the driver.

TEACHER: James, are you ready?

JAMES: I'll be ready if you give me five more minutes.

TEACHER: Irving Rhein are you ready?

IRVING: Yesterday I was playing football with some boys. I made a big kick at the ball and instead of hitting it I turned a somerset. The boys laughed at me.

TEACHER: Correct the sentence: "I made a big kick at the ball".

PUPIL: I made a kick at the ball and turned a somerset.

TEACHER: Someone can make the sentence better than that.

PUPIL: I kicked at the ball and turned a somersault.

TEACHER: Irwin.

IRWIN: A few days ago a boy asked me to play buttons with him. Another boy asked me to lend him a button so he could play, too. When the game was over, the boy that borrowed the button had all of my buttons.

TEACHER: Tell some good things about Irwin's story.

PUPIL: He didn't have any unnecessary words.

PUPIL: He knew when to stop.

TEACHER: Clarice.

CLARICE: Last winter my brother and I

made a snow man. We put a hat on him and gave him a stick to hold for a gun. After a while my mother called us in to eat dinner. While we were eating some boys came along and broke down our snow man. We came out and had a snow ball fight. We won the fight.

TEACHER: Tell some good things about Clarice's story.

PUPIL: It was interesting. I was glad they won the fight.

TEACHER: James, are you ready now? Your five minutes are up.

JAMES: Sunday I went to a movie. It was Buster Keaton. He went under water to fix his boat. Then a sword fish came. He killed it. Then another one came. He had a duel with it and stabbed it. While he was fighting with the fish, some cannibals came and took the girl that was on his boat. When Buster Keaton came out of the water he went to the land and frightened the cannibals. Then he brought the girl back to his boat.

TEACHER: Our time is up. Others may tell their stories tomorrow. I shall not talk then. You must do it all.

IN A LETTER to Lafayette, Washington wrote in response to an inquiry:

"In answer to the observations you make on the probability of my election to the presidency, knowing me as you do, I need only say, that it has no enticing charms and no fascinating allurements for me . . . The increasing infirmities of nature and the growing love of retirement do not permit me to entertain a wish beyond that of living and dying an honest man on my own farm."

ALL ON A VALENTINE

ETHEL BLAIR JORDAN

"**D**ID YOU ever really look at a valentine?" asked Aunt Frances. Shirley lifted a surprised face from the half-dozen valentines the postman had just brought.

"Why Aunt Frances! What am I doing now?"

"Well, you seem to be looking," agreed Aunt Frances, "but let's see." She covered the largest valentine with a newspaper. "Now tell me what this valentine has on it."

"It has lace paper and red hearts," began Shirley glibly, "and—and 'To my Valentine' in gold letters, and—that's all, I think," she ended uncertainly.

Aunt Frances removed the newspaper.

"Oh, it has a Cupid with his bow and arrows and four doves with blue ribbons in their beaks, as well as the other things!" exclaimed Shirley.

"You see you hadn't really looked at it," said Aunt Frances. "You know, all these little decorations have a history."

"Tell me about the doves first," Shirley requested, settling herself for a story.

"Many hundreds of years ago," began Aunt Frances, "the ancient Greeks believed in all sorts of gods and goddesses who lived on a high mountain that reached into the clouds and was called Mount Olympus. One day a boatman saw something as light as sea foam floating over the waves. It glided through the waters, whirling round and round and finally rose into the air as if on wings and became a most beautiful woman. This is the Greek story of the birth of Aphrodite, or Venus, the goddess of beauty and love. So beautiful and gentle was she that doves were her especial birds and an ancient picture shows her seated in a car drawn by flocks of doves attached to it by blue ribbons."

"That accounts for the doves," said Shirley. "What about Cupid?"

"Aphrodite was married to Hephaestus, or Vulcan, the god of forges, and Eros, or Cupid, was their son. He was a mischievous little fellow, and his father having made him a little bow and some arrows, Eros one day dipped his arrows into a magic love charm of his mother's and ran through the world shooting right and left. There was a dreadful mix-up for a while, as everybody fell in love with the wrong person. Aphrodite straightened out the mischief some way, but ever since Eros has been condemned to go about seeking to help true lovers."

"Was St. Valentine a Greek god too?" asked Shirley.

"No, he was high-priest of a Greek temple in Rome when Claudius was Emperor. Claudius was a cruel ruler who cared only for wars; but the young Romans grew tired of constant fighting, and refused to leave their wives and sweethearts. Then Claudius declared that there should be no more marriages nor even engagements. All the lovers of Rome were in despair until it was whispered that the good Valentine had secretly married a young couple. Others flocked to him and he performed the ceremony, always in secret and usually by night. But the spies of the cruel Claudius carried the news to the Emperor and Valentine was thrown into prison, where he died."

"Oh!" protested Shirley. "Couldn't the young people help him?"

"There was nothing they could do against the Emperor; but every year on the birthday of the beloved Valentine people met and talked of his good deeds and agreed to call the day by his name and celebrate it as Lovers' Day."

"He would have liked that, I think," Shirley said dreamily. Then as a sudden

thought struck her she exclaimed: "Why how strange! He never even saw a valentine!"

"I should say not!" laughed Aunt Frances. "Such things weren't even heard of in his day. And until very recent years ready-made valentines were very rare and usually consisted of a few lines or verses printed on coarse brown paper. In some cases the young man sent a bouquet of flowers done up in a frill of lace paper."

"And that accounts for the lace paper on our valentines," remarked Shirley.

"Yes. But listen to these verses which I found yesterday in an old book published in 1812 and called: 'The Cabinet of Love; or Cupid's Repository of Choice Valentines.'"

"What a name!"

"The verses are worse. They are written by a shoemaker.

"A piece of charming kid you are
As e'er mine eyes did see,
No calf-skin smooth that e'er I saw
Can be compared with thee."

"How ridiculous!" exclaimed Shirley, laughing. "It sounds like a comic valentine!"

"Absurd as it seems, you may be sure that it was meant seriously," said Aunt Frances. "Comic valentines, as you call them, are contrary to the spirit of Valentine's day, and I think would have offended the good old saint."

"I'm sure that Saint Valentine would not have liked them," agreed Shirley thoughtfully. "We talked it over with Miss Fairman at school yesterday, and decided never to send 'comics'. They often hurt people's feelings."

"A good idea!" was Aunt Frances' comment. "And I'm sure," she added smiling, "that any one in your class could write a prettier verse than this with his eyes shut."

"Why not!" cried Shirley, gathering up her valentines. "With all you've told me about blue ribbons and lace paper, I'm sure that I could write valentine verses for my whole class."

SAILOR'S SONG

*Thomas Lovell Beddoes
(1803-1849)*

T O SEA, to sea! The calm is o'er;
The wanton water leaps in sport,
And rattles down the pebbly shore;
The dolphin wheels, the sea-cows snort,
And unseen mermaids' pearly song
Comes bubbling up, the weeds among.
Fling broad the sail, dip deep the oar;
To sea, to sea! the calm is o'er.

To sea, to sea! our wide-winged bark
Shall billowy cleave its sunny way,
And with its shadow, fleet and dark,
Break the caved Triton's azure day,
Like mighty eagle soaring light
O'er antelopes on Alpine height.
The anchor heaves, the ship swings free,
The sails swell full. To sea, to sea!

EDITORIALS

The Elementary English Review

THE ELEMENTARY ENGLISH REVIEW is published monthly from September to June in the interest of teachers of English in the elementary schools. It is sponsored by the following board of advisers:

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THE TEXT AS A FACTOR

THOSE WHO use text books have a responsibility no less than the authors themselves in making them better. The text book is one of the strongest influences that is felt within the English classroom. It is responsible in good measure for the teacher's treatment of children and of subject matter; for his neglect of one or the other, or of both. It is one means by which he does his work educationally either well or poorly. It is a means of work that the majority of teachers will not dispense with for some time to come. The teacher should recognize this influence, and prepare himself to say

on what basis he will accept it in the future. He should through constructive criticism aid the makers of text books in the creation and development of a more scientific and artistic product than has been available in the past.

The author of the article—"The Text as a Factor in Poor English," *The Elementary School Journal* for December—has made a definite attack upon the problem. His criticisms are direct and to the point. They are sufficiently concrete to be checked up and verified by persons vitally concerned. And who is not concerned among the teachers of elementary school English?

To those who are interested, this writer and critic undertakes to say what should be looked for in the improved text. Briefly summarized the principles stated by him are as follows:

1. The text should furnish guidance where it is needed to both pupil and teacher.
2. The language of the text should be intelligible and appropriate to the purposes it is expected to serve.
3. The book should be a model of good English.
4. Since both pupils and teachers are concerned directly in the use of the book, its subject matter must be clearly organized with reference to both teacher and pupils.
5. Individual and group differences must be provided for in a practical way.
6. A minimum course should be presented with abundant supplementary material.
7. The text should be based upon sound procedures psychologically.

8. The language text should be a model of craftsmanship.

Another article inviting careful attention is "Pupil Activities in Elementary English Texts" in this number of THE REVIEW.

WASHINGTON WAS NO PRIG

WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY affords an excellent opportunity for the children to combine straight thinking with their language activities—both oral and written. Rarely do we find a character that can be made so interesting to children as *Washington*. There is, however, so much of the legendary and fictitious woven about his name as to make this great man little more than a shadow to young Americans of today.

This is wrong; for libraries contain, or should contain, information in abundance to give more human impressions of Washington and to make him an intelligible being to children. There are books available, and pictures as well, that will make children feel at ease in talking and writing about him—though, of course, it is necessary to go farther afield than the cherry tree myth.

Here is a real opportunity for the use of the library; and if there is none accessible, for demonstrating the need of one. If there is a library, it should be organized at once for the proper observance of Washington's birthday. Exhibits of books, magazine articles, and pictures, should be attractively displayed. Classes should be guided into the library for information of the right kind concerning George Washington, and they should be frankly told what social science teachers are saying—that Washington was no prig. The letter by Washington, and the copy of the engraving, "The Mother of Washington," pages 17, 18, are cues of the right kind, and will help start the children in the right direction.

BUT DON'T BE TOO LITERAL

IT WOULD BE WRONG, wouldn't it, to take all the pigment, the glow of color, from our national traditions. There is a place for imagination, and with it, truth itself may reside. It does not *see* literally; neither did Homer in his blindness. The distinction that must be made is the distinction between vision or idealism and stupidity. Because the cherry-tree myth is stupid is no reason why other traditions of the life of a great man must be swept aside.

One is reminded of the devastating gesture of Horace Greeley as he sent into oblivion the hordes of anecdotes by Abraham Lincoln. "Almost everyone has personal anecdotes of 'Old Abe,'" he said. "I knew him more than sixteen years, met him often, talked with him familiarly; yet, while multitudes fancy that he was always overflowing with jocular narrations or reminiscences, I cannot remember that I ever heard him tell an anecdote or story."

Yet the stories continue to be attributed to Lincoln; for it is true that many of these old anecdotes are particularly faithful to our conceptions of the man. They have in consequence survived to be woven into more artistic forms of expression. Perhaps Greeley was not right after all. It may be that he was too literal.

The point to be made is that America has her literary traditions no less than her historic past. In these are expressed the ideals of a people under the influence of their greatest heroes. English teachers should help the boys and girls in their classes understand that there are Washington and Lincoln traditions in our literature. A measure of the richness of these may be taken by listing the stories, plays, poems and novels that are inspired by these characters. Of course the best understanding will come from reading about the men themselves.

REVIEWS AND ABSTRACTS

THE GENIUS OF AMERICA. By Stuart Pratt Sherman. New York City: Chas. Scribner.

Ever so often there appears a book that gathers together and integrates for us the vague meanings of the literature of the day. A book of this kind we read for a clearer comprehension of life, and for larger sympathies and keener understanding in our associations among both men and books.

Stuart Sherman in "The Genius of America" has performed for all of us a service profoundly worth while. For in these essays the author interprets the younger generation to their elders, and frankly appraises the literature of the times.

One needs such guidance as Dr. Sherman's little book furnishes to read safely and intelligently in these days of manias and of social stress and strain. The book furnishes a very satisfactory background for a critical view of both literature and life. My purpose in reviewing the book is merely that of piquing your curiosity and arousing your interest—just this and nothing more. I would like everyone to read this book, and then to reply to its challenges in his own way.

The chapter on Shifting Centers of Morality is stirring and entertaining. The effects of the war are discussed chiefly from the standpoint of the young people who have become susceptible to the *external* and the *superficial*, because of the "drives", the campaigns, and the group pacing of war times. All this helped to shift moral control from within the individual to external social control. Dr. Sherman thinks that both in our books and in our lives we are tending toward a *social morality* which makes an individual more ready to go wrong with the crowd than right by himself.

Mark Twain is called the most original force in American letters and on the whole the most broadly representative of American writers between the close of the Civil War and the end of the century. So thinks Dr. Sherman.

"Since the time of the Connecticut Yankee and Carnegie's Triumphant Democracy, our

literary interpreters have been gradually shifting their ground. They are now giving us a criticism of life from a position at which it is possible to see through the poetic illusion about the average man.

"The most hopeful aspect of American literature today is its widespread pessimism." Dr. Sherman calls this pessimism *hopeful* because it comes from elements of our population, which forty years ago were most addicted to boasting and vulgarizing.

C. C. C.

JAPANESE FAIRY TALES. By Lafcadio Hearn. New York City: Boni and Liveright.

The children will like this book and read it with excitement and enjoyment, from the first story to the last. Each story contains information concerning quaint Japanese customs and beliefs.

No child could help being attracted by the wide margined pages, the clear, black type and the beautifully colored illustrations of soft shades throughout the book.

The volume is bound most attractively. It has a pleasing frontispiece in color, such as real Japanese art produces.

The book is a convenient size.

MARGORIE M. BROWN.

BETTER EVERYDAY ENGLISH. By H. G. Paul. Lyons & Carnahan. 1924.

A most useful book for the teacher is Dr. H. G. Paul's *Better Everyday English*. Its discussions of "Good English as an excellent investment" and its series of chapters on ways and means of forming good speech habits and building vocabulary and mastering the sentence will give help where help is needed. Its discussion of the development of our language and of pronunciation, slang, and other aspects of word choice will add to our intelligent attitude in a region where English teachers have often been doctrinaire and ill informed. It should be required reading for all teachers and for all other persons who claim authority over the speech and writings of others.

S. A. L.

FROM THE PERIODICALS

AN INTRODUCTION TO BIOGRAPHY FOR YOUNG CHILDREN WHO TEST ABOVE 150 I.Q.—In an attempt to enrich the curriculum for specially gifted children, the study of biography was introduced because it offers a preparation for life by presenting life adjustments others have made, because these children were ready to profit by such material, and because of the influences that the study of lives establishes. The work was conducted under the direct supervision of a teacher for one semester, and by the children themselves for one year. This work correlates easily with every study in the curriculum. The article contains a valuable list of biographies and also a list of reference books.—Leta S. Hollingworth, *Teachers College Record* (December, 1924). Page 277.

A STORE FOR DOLLS—A FIRST GRADE PROJECT—An account of a project carried on in the Horace Mann School.—Adah May Varney, *Journal of Educational Method* (January, 1925). Page 209.

THE SINGLE SALARY SCHEDULE IN PRACTICE—Dr. Hosic's report of the investigation of the single salary schedule is of great interest. This schedule has been adopted as a means to improve the elementary school, and has proven satisfactory in most cases. The author also points out some disadvantages which might accompany it.—James F. Hosic, *Teachers College Record* (December, 1924). Page 288.

INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP THROUGH CHILDREN'S BOOKS—Some books like narrow, pinched experiences may be the source of blind prejudice and intolerance. Emphasis is placed upon: (1) Giving children right kind of prejudice; (2) books selected to do this; (3) other books that train children to think.—Clara W. Hunt, *Publishers' Weekly* (December, 27, 1924).

CURRICULUM BUILDING IN ENGLISH—The address of the President of the National Council of Teachers of English, delivered on November 28, 1924, at St. Louis. The group for whom the curriculum is shaped must be considered. Dissatisfaction with traditional English must not confuse the sense of values. Three important steps in reconstructing the course of study in English are: the analysis of the problem; an analysis of the demands of home, business and community to discover the

functions of English; and an evaluation of the subject matter to best attain aims.—Essie Chamberlain, *The English Journal* (January, 1925). Page 1.

THE TEXT AS A FACTOR IN POOR ENGLISH—The discussion is based upon a critical study of three books "recognized as among the best of the recent elementary language texts." Many obvious defects are pointed out that apply "in a general way to most books of this kind". Outstanding defects are found to be: Shifting forms of personal pronouns, incoherency, inaccuracies, an attempt to supplant the teacher, a deadly, monotonous use of questions, a neglect to utilize the experiences of the children, an unintelligent insistence upon rules, the neglect of the principles of selective drill, "explaining the inexplicable", conflicting requirements. In the opinion of the writer, the good points of the texts outweigh the faults. As a result of his critical study, he states eight principles for the construction of elementary language texts. These principles seem to apply to really fundamental considerations.—H. E. Bennett, *The Elementary School Journal* (December, 1924). Page 277.

MY FRIENDS, THE DEER—A story by the care-taker on Hardy Island of British Columbia. He tells how he made friends of the deer on the Island. The story is magnificently illustrated.—Tom Brazil, *Nature Magazine* (January, 1925). Page 5.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR OUT OF DOORS THIS MONTH—Composition teachers will find in this section much helpful matter each month.—*Visual Education* (December, 1924).

MODERN POETRY FOR MODERN CHILDREN—PART II—The writer introduces the modern poets to first grade children.

The poetry that whets the hunger rather than appeases it is among her findings. She tells what first grade children like from Lindsay and why they like it. The children speak for themselves.—Edna A. Cullamore, *Childhood Education* (February, 1925). Page 272.

SPEECH DISORDERS AND DISORDERS OF PERSONALITY IN CHILDREN—A discussion of fundamental aspects of defects in speech and personality. Three functions of speech are given, as: (1) A short cut to action; (2) chief way of expressing emotional life; (3) a means by

which we adjust ourselves to other people.—Meley Blanton, M.D., *Childhood Education* (February, 1925). Page 269.

A SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF VISUAL EDUCATION—The purpose of the study is to determine the value of different forms of visual education. Thirteen separate studies are the basis of the conclusions stated in this article. These conclusions indicate that motion pictures have been overestimated in comparison with slides, pictures, and demonstrations. The greatest value of the motion picture lies in its peculiar content of the experience thus made possible.—Frank N. Freeman, *Journal of Educational Research* (December, 1924). Page 375.

CRYSTAL SET CONSTRUCTION—Boys, especially in the upper grades, may be stirred to talk and write through this article.—*Visual Education* (December, 1924). Page 420.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SPEECH TRAINING—This is a technical article by an expert, a stu-

dent of speech, and an experienced teacher: He points to the 1,200,000 or 1,600,000 children in our schools who are suffering from defective speech. His plea is for the skilled teacher to remove the defects and improve the speech.—William N. Brigance, *Educational Review* (December, 1924). Page 234.

WHAT UNDERSTANDING OF HUMAN SOCIETY SHOULD EDUCATION DEVELOP?—This article is the third of a series by Dr. Bobbitt on curriculum making. In it the writer discusses the need of giving in the schools a *balanced vision of the world as made up of interdependent parts*. As a source upon which the curriculum maker may draw in meeting this requirement he points to books of encyclopedic information. Two studies in this connection are cited, one in detail relating to 128 encyclopedic articles upon 32 different countries. The article contains six tables presenting findings resulting from this latter study.—Franklin Bobbitt, *The Elementary School Journal* (December, 1924). Page 290.

PATRIOTISM

Sir Walter Scott

BREATHES there the man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
“This is my own, my native land!”
Whose heart hath ne’er within him burn’d
As home his footsteps he hath turned
From wandering on a foreign strand?
If such there breathe, go, mark him well;
For him no Minstrel raptures swell;
High though his titles, proud his name,
Boundless his wealth as wish can claim;
Despite those titles, power, and pelf,
The wretch, concentrated all in self,
Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
And, doubly dying, shall go down
To the vile dust from whence he sprung,
Unwept, unonor’d, and unsung.

SHOP TALK

READING TESTS AND PRACTICE EXERCISES IN ILLINOIS

DEAN William S. Gray, of the College of Education, University of Chicago, is co-operating with the Illinois Valley Section of the Illinois State Teachers Association in organizing reading tests and practice exercises for use in the schools of five counties of the district. These tests have been given during the latter part of the present year for the purpose of discussing the accomplishments and needs of the pupils in reading in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades. A general meeting will be held in Ottawa early in January at which the general program for the winter and spring will be outlined to principals, superintendents, and supervisors.

NATION WIDE SURVEY OF KINDERGARTENS

A STUDY of "General Practice in Kindergartens in the United States" is being made under the Department of Kindergarten Education of the National Education Association and with the authorization of the Executive Committee of that organization. The two means being used to determine what constitutes "General Practice in Kindergartens" are stenographic reports of full kindergarten sessions, and returns from a questionnaire sent through superintendents to a large number of kindergartens throughout the country. Every effort has been made to have these reports represent public, private and normal school demonstration kindergartens in each state and the response has been most generous.

The questionnaire which will be distributed in February has been built with care and has been criticized and amended by specialists in kindergarten work as well as by experts in making questionnaires. The mailing list is made up of those superintendents reporting salaries apportioned to kindergartners in response to the 1923 salary inquiry of the Research Division of the National Education Association. The cooperation of all who are interested in scientific investigations and in promoting and improving kindergarten work will be greatly appreciated by the committee in charge, of which Miss Mary Dabney Davis, of Darien, Connecticut, is chairman. Copies of

the final report will be sent to those assisting in gathering information.

AGNES WINN,
*Division of Classroom Service,
The National Education Association.*

ENGLISH AND BUSINESS

Report of the Committee on Commercial Education Research, New York City Board of Education

THE REPORT gives an outside view of classroom English. It also gives an inside view of business English. The committee set about to investigate six or seven big problems. The following are representative:

What specific uses of language, oral and written, are required in representative industries?

As regards the language requirements of industry not now fully met by the schools, which among them should be provided by industry itself, as of specialized nature? Which among them are of sufficiently general significance and interest to be provided by the schools?

The investigators worked in pairs, a teacher and a business man in each pair. Each visited the other at his work.

Sections of the report of particular interest to elementary school teachers of English are:

Section II. The uses of English in Modern Business—Oral—Carrying messages, telephoning. Written—Letters, reports, "memos", etc.

Section IV. Specimens of written material from New York Business Houses—Letters, Short Reports, Bulletins, Telegrams.

Section VI. Correspondence Manuals.

BETTER SPEECH YEAR BY THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON AMERICAN SPEECH

Published by the National Council of Teachers of English, 506 West Sixty-ninth Street, Chicago, Illinois

This pamphlet is filled with rich material for elementary school teachers of English. Of course, a report prepared as this one was for secondary schools must be adapted to the needs of lower grades. Nevertheless, the elementary

school teacher will find in it many worthwhile ideas and suggestions not available to her elsewhere. For example, the sections on Speech as Communication and Improving the Language, deal with principles too fundamental not to apply in the elementary school. This is also true of the sections on Standards, Improving the Voice, Improving Action, and on Speech Disorders. The discussions upon Speech Training and Dramatics, and upon Speech Improvement as a Problem of Socialization, are very practical in their applications.

SELECTIVE ADMISSION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

A REMARKABLE incident is related in a *Dialogue with a Dean*, one of the most effective pamphlets recently issued by the University of Chicago in connection with its development campaign.

"Selective admission in its essential feature," explained the dean, "is that in considering whether a boy or girl should be admitted to college, we take into account not only all the evidence we can get as to individual human qualities and experiences. I believe I have in my pocket one of the admission blanks we use." The last and most impressive question asked in the blank was this: "Of all things you have accomplished, which have given you the greatest personal satisfaction?"

A look of pleasurable reminiscence came over the dean's face. "I'll tell you an experience:

"At a meeting of the deans last year I drew at random from the transfer case nearest me one student's blank. Well, this boy listed debating as his special hobby; and when it came to the question as to what accomplishment had given him the most satisfaction, he had replied, 'Being a member of my high-school debating team, and being elected president of my class senior year.'

"Then followed the autobiography, which I found creditable but not especially striking, until I came to the last sentence. It was this: 'I have not been able to fill out this blank in my own handwriting, as requested, because I am blind.'

There was another silence. "And what after that?" asked the Hard-Headed Citizen, gently.

"Well, on registration day, while I was supervising the general procedure, it chanced that just one Freshman came to me, instead of to his own dean, for information. It was the blind boy."

"That was last year?" "Yes."

"Well—and then? How did he—?"

The dean's face lighted up.

"That blind boy was one of the honor students of last year."

AMONG THE PUBLISHERS

THE HAPPY CHILDREN READERS. By Mary E. Pennell and Alice M. Cusack. Book One, illustrated by Gertrude A. Kay. Book Two, illustrated by Maud and Miska Petersham. Boston, Ginn and Company. 1925.

cation, University of Chicago. 1924. Pp. x, 182. \$1.75.

EDUCATIONAL RADIO PROGRAM. New York Board of Education. 1924. Pp. 254.

PRACTICAL PROJECTS FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS. By Lillian P. Lincoln. Boston: Ginn and Co. 1924. Pp. viii, 312. \$1.48.

THE MATERIALS OF READING. By Willis L. Uhl. Newark, N. J.; Silver Burdett. Pp. xiv, 386.

THE STATUS AND PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL. Edited by Arthur S. Gist. Third Yearbook of the Department of Elementary School Principals of the National Education Association. Washington, D. C.: Department of Elementary School Principals, N. E. A. Pp. 195-634. \$1.50.

TEACHING ENGLISH IN ELEMENTARY AND JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS: A MANUAL OF METHOD. By Paul Klapper. New York, D. Appleton and Company. 1925. Pp. xiv, 355.

GOOD ENGLISH IN SPEAKING AND WRITING. Fourth Grade, Fifth Grade, Sixth Grade. By Nell J. Young and Frederick W. Memmott. New York, D. Appleton and Company. 1925.

CURRICULUM PRACTICES IN THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL AND GRADES 5 AND 6. By James M. Glass. Supplementary Educational Monographs, No. 25. Chicago: Department of Edu-

THE CIVIL SERVICE GRAPHIC RATING SCALE

TEACHERS of English will do well to study rating schemes in use in institutions of various types, and to experiment with adaptations suited to classroom needs.

The new graphic rating scale recently adopted by the Personnel Classification Board for the rating of all employees in the Civil Service in the District of Columbia offers an opportunity for such study. By this scale employees will be rated for promotion, demotion, or dismissal. It is said to be much simpler than other scales designed for efficiency rating. One sheet, a graphic scale, is used for rating each individual. Only *designated service elements* are used in rating the individual.

The number of elements designated varies from four to ten,

usually five or six, depending on the character of duties performed.

An outline of the scale is shown below.

It will be observed that each service element is divided into five positions, in one of which the rating officer places a check mark to indicate the degree of efficiency.

There are fifteen elements on the scale with a sixteenth one left blank.

These elements themselves furnish an interesting basis for study. They include: technical information, accuracy, orderliness, neatness, speed, executive ability, power to organize, dependency, initiative, industry, judgment, leadership, cooperative ness, winning personality.

ELEMENT NUMBER	SERVICE ELEMENTS	NOTE: MARK ONLY ON ELEMENTS CHECKED IN LEFT-HAND MARGIN	DO NOT USE SPACE BELOW				
			Highest possible accuracy.	Careful.	No more than reasonable time required for revision.	Careless.	Practically worthless work.
<input type="checkbox"/>	1 Consider accuracy; ability to produce work free from error; ability to detect errors.		Very careful.			Doubtful reliability.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	2 Consider reliability in the execution of signed tasks; dependability in following instructions; accuracy of any parts of product appraisable in terms of accuracy.		Very reliable.			Unreliable.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	3 Consider neatness and orderliness of work.		Very neat and orderly.			Disorderly.	Slovenly.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Consider the speed or rapidity with which work is accomplished; the quantity of work produced in a given time; the dispatch with which a task of known difficulty is completed.		Great neatest possible and orderliness.	Very rapid.	Good speed.	Slow.	Hopelessly slow.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Consider industry; diligence; attentiveness; energy and application to duties; the degree to which the employee really concentrates on the work at hand.		Greatest possible rapidity.	Very diligent.	Industrious.	Inattentive to work.	Lazy.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Consider knowledge of work; present knowledge of job and of work related to it; specialized knowledge in his particular field.		Completely informed.	Unusually well informed.	Well informed.	Poorly informed.	Lacking.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Consider judgment; ability to grasp a situation and draw correct conclusions; ability to						

On the whole, do you consider the deportment and attitude of this employee toward his work to be satisfactory?		Total Answer "Yes" or "No"	Final rating
Reviewed by:	(Rating officer)	(Date)	
<input type="checkbox"/> 7 Consider judgment; ability to grasp a situation and profit by experience; sense of proportion or relative values; common sense.	Perfect judgment.	Good judgment.	Poor judgment.
<input type="checkbox"/> 8 Consider success in winning confidence and respect; control of emotions; poise.	Inspiring.	Excellent judgment.	Weak.
<input type="checkbox"/> 9 Consider cooperativeness; ability to work for and with others; readiness to give new ideas and methods a fair trial; desire to observe and conform with the policies of the management.	Greatest possible cooperative-cooperativeness.	Very cooperative.	Difficult to handle.
<input type="checkbox"/> 10 Consider initiative; resourcefulness; success in doing things in new and better ways and in adapting improved methods to his own work; constructive thinking.	Greatest possible originality.	Very resourceful.	Rarely suggests.
<input type="checkbox"/> 11 Consider execution; ability to pursue to the end difficult investigations or assignments.	Completes assignments in shortest possible time.	Completes assignments in usually short time.	Slow in completing assignments; or does not complete assignments.
<input type="checkbox"/> 12 Consider organizing ability; success in organizing the work of his section, division, or department, both by delegating authority wisely and by making certain that results are achieved; ability to plan so as to complete tasks on schedule.	Highest possible effectiveness.	Effective under difficult circumstances.	Lacks planning ability.
<input type="checkbox"/> 13 Consider leadership; success in winning the cooperation of his subordinates and in welding them into a loyal and effective working unit; decisiveness; energy; self control; tact; courage; fairness in dealing with others.	Most capable and forceful leader possible.	Very capable and forceful leader.	Inefficient.
<input type="checkbox"/> 14 Consider success in improving and developing employees by imparting information, developing talent, and arousing ambition; ability to teach; ability to explain matters clearly and comprehensively.	Develops employees of highest caliber.	Develops competent employees.	Fails to develop employees.
<input type="checkbox"/> 15 (To be used only where accurate and comprehensive OUTPUT RECORDS are kept.)	Highest output possible.	Good output.	Low output.
		Practically no output.	

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